

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 /063 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2759

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI NIACT IMMEDIATE

USMISSION PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMCONSUL KARACHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 10362

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, IN, BG

SUBJECT: MFA VIEW OF BANGLADESH DEVELOPMENTS

1. IN DISCUSSION ON MORNING NOVEMBER 8 WITH POL COUNSELOR, MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL (SOUTH ASIA) HAYAT MEHDI SAID THAT WHILE ANY JUDGEMENT WAS NECESSARILY PREMATURE GIVEN BOTH FAST-CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES AND LIMITED INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO GOP, IT WAS HIS VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE SOME TIME BEFORE THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BANGLADESH REACHED A NEW STATE OF EQUILIBRIUM. HE REMARKED THAT NO ONE COULD BE CERTAIN AT THIS TIME ABOUT MILITARY UNITS IN OUTLYING AREAS AND CALLED ATTENTION TO CONTINUING PRESENCE OF PRO-MUJIB SENTIMENT AS EVIDENCED IN DACCA DEMONSTRATIONS EARLIER IN WEEK. HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR THE INFORMATION WE HAD BEEN ABLE TO SHARE WITH MFA DURING WEEK.

2. MEHDI MADE IT CLEAR THAT GOP PREFERRED ZIAUR RAHMAN TO
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KHALID MOSHTARAFF AS DE FACTO POWER IN BD. HE SAID IT WAS

GENERALLY FELT AT MFA THAT MOSHTARAFF HAD BEEN "ANTI-PAKISTANI" (READ PRO-INDIAN). (THIS VIEW HAD SURFACED AT MFA THURSDAY EVENING WHEN MOSHTARAFF HAD EVIDENTLY COME OUT ON TOP AND WAS REFLECTED IN SOME PRESS EDITORIALS FRIDAY MORNING WHICH WARNED AGAINST CHANGES IN THE "NON-ALIGNED" FOREIGN POLICY ESTABLISHED BY MUSHTAQUE AHMED.) LIKE OTHERS AT MFA WE HAVE TALKED TO, MEHDI PROVIDED ONLY FLIMSY EVIDENCE TO BACK THIS ASSESSMENT OF MOSHTARAFF'S ALLEGED POLITICAL SYMPATHIES.

3. MEHDI SAID THAT WHILE HE WAS SOMEWHAT CONCERNED ABOUT THE CONTENTS OF STATEMENTS MADE BY PM GANDHI AND AN MEA SPOKESMAN ABOUT BD SITUATION (NEW DELHI 14839), HE THOUGH INDIAN INTERVENTION THERE MOST UNLIKELY AT THIS TIME. HE SAID THAT GOI WOULD HAVE LITTLE TO GAIN AND MUCH TO LOSE BY ANY OVERT MOVE. HE NOTED THAT IN LIGHT OF HER PRESENTLY STRONG POSITION DOMESTICALLY, MRS. GANDHI DID NOT NEED SUCH A MOVE POLITICALLY AND WOULD BE AWARE OF DANGER THAT IT COULD EASILY BACKFIRE. HE SAID HE BELIEVED THAT IN ANY EVENT INDIANS WOULD MAKE NO MOVE UNTIL THERE WAS SOME IMMEDIATE CAUSE FOR THEIR INTERVENTION SUCH AS FLIGHT OF HINDU.

4. ON QUESTION OF PAK-BD DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, MEHDI SAID GOP WOULD NOW AWAIT CONFIRMATION FROM BDG THAT CANDIDATE ALREADY GIVEN PAK AGREEMENT AS FIRST BENGALEE AMBASSADOR TO ISLAMABAD WOULD STILL BE COMING HERE. ONCE THIS RECEIVED, GOP WOULD SEND ITS OWN NOMINATION TO DACCA: MEHDI SAID SHORT LIST NOW BEFORE PM. MEANWHILE, OFFLOADING OF SECOND PAK RELIEF SUPPLY SHIP IS CONTINUING AT CHITTAGONG AND THIRD SHIP IS BEING LOADED AT KARACHI.

5. MFA HAS TO DATE ISSUED NO STATEMENT ON BANGLADESH DEVELOPMENTS AND MEHDI GAVE NO INDICATION IT PLANNED TO BREAK THIS CAREFUL PUBLIC SILENCE.
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